

The Bravard Enigma

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Narrative has been a large part of all cultures dating back to the Ancient Mesopotamians and Greeks. It shapes our minds and the way we interact with others. Ever since I was a child, my family has told stories about my great-grandfather. My passion for my family history has driven me to write down the stories about my great-grandfather and his life, starting with his childhood and going through to his late adult life and death.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Bruce Geelhoed and Dr. Paul Ranieri for advising me throughout this project. Their help and advice was instrumental to the completion of this thesis.

I would also like to thank my family for providing the stories and laughter that accompanied this project and my friends for motivating me to keep going.

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Project Analysis Statement

I had many questions when I began my thesis. Why did I choose this topic for my paper? What sources was I going to use? How would I organize the paper? Throughout writing this thesis, I discovered the answers to these questions and others than emerged along the way.

I choose this topic for my paper because of my interest in my family's history. My family is my foundation; they made me who I am today. My great-grandfather was the cornerstone of our family, I always knew that. What I didn't know is how much he truly shaped our family. He instilled in his children a sense of hard work but also reminded them to have fun. He taught them the value of education and helping their community. I never met Pop, he died eight years before I was born. Through conversations about him and writing this paper, I now feel like I know who he was. While working on my thesis, I learned many new aspects about Pop and my family's history.

The sources I used vary widely. I found many different newspaper articles to use from a variety of papers. These articles corroborated my family's stories. I used scholarly articles and books, both online and published, and novels. Throughout my four year college career, I've rarely had to write a research paper. Writing this thesis not only taught me about my family, but also about different research methods and tools.

Organizing my paper was a tough decision. I didn't want to do a traditional chronological paper, but I also didn't want the stories to be without a focus on how they connect. In late February/early March, I decided to organize my paper in a modified chronological way. I start with a section about Pop and me and then go into his childhood, then his military service, and then his adult life with a focus on different parts of his personality: childlike, family man, green

thumb, helpful, ingenious, and sporty. The paper then ends with his late adult life and death.

This way the stories are in order, but the paper isn't rigidly chronological.

When I was beginning my thesis, I found it hard to actually sit down and write. I did all the technical things I could until there was nothing left. Eventually, I took Dr. Paul Ranieri's advice and just started writing sentences. With that in mind, I was able to begin, continue, and finish my thesis.

With the completion of my thesis, I feel as if I've accomplished something that I can share with my family and use to teach future generations about Pop. When I was first told about Pop, he always seemed to be this untouchable figure. After listening to all the stories and researching his life and his times, he now seems more approachable and human.

Introduction

People have been sharing narratives about their families for a long time. From oral traditions in Ancient Greek culture to posting a child's first steps on Instagram, people are proud to share narratives of their families.

Webster's dictionary defines narrative as "a way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values."¹ What Webster doesn't include is the *power* of narrative. The power of the narrative affects all people from a young age. Tom Trabasso reports that an estimated 90% of all that

¹ "Narrative", Merriam-Webster, accessed March 25, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/narrative>.

elementary schoolchildren read is narrative.² In 2002 a study by the Research Division of the National Endowment for the Arts found that 56.6% of the population read any book and 46.7% of the tested population read literature including novels, short stories, poetry, or plays³. While the percentage of people who read for fun decreases as age increases, this is still a large part of society. Narrative is powerful because it transcends boundaries and reaches people of all ages, nationalities, and races. Narrative is used to bridge the gaps that divide people, to bring them closer together and to explain human thoughts and actions.

Narrative is used across disciplines. It is not only important for writers and educators, but also for scientists. Scientists have begun to embrace storytelling as “one of the most powerful forms of communication that exists.”⁴ They examined the neural activity behind storytelling and found that the brain activity correlated with the spoken words of the story. They discovered a relationship between the listener’s and the speaker’s brains. They also discovered that the same stories conjured the same responses across lingual barriers. A 2006 study in Spain found that when people looked at Spanish words for perfume and coffee, their “primary olfactory cortex lit up.” A 2012 study from Emory University found similar results with words corresponding with touch. Narratives allow us to practice our ability of figuring out how others are feelings by allowing us to identify with the characters in the story and guess at their

² Tom Trabasso, “The Power of the Narrative,” in *Reading, Language, and Literacy: Instruction for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Fran Lehr and Jean Osborn (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 187.

³ Tom Bradshaw and Bonnie Nichols, *Reading At Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America* (Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Arts, 2004), 4, Z1003.2.B73 2004.

⁴ Wendy A. Suzuki, et al., “Dialogues: The Science and Power of Storytelling”, *The Journal of Neuroscience* 38: no. 44 (2018): 9468, accessed April 19, 2019, DOI: 10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1942-18.2018

motives and what they will do. Reading narratives allow us to utilize our real life skills, such as empathy.⁵

Narrative is also psychologically necessary, as Arthur Applebee found in this book *The Child's Concept of Story: Ages Two to Seventeen*. In this book, Applebee reports that narrative is psychologically necessary because it helps children to assimilate and accommodate.

Assimilation is the “process by which a new object or behavior is integrated into an existing record or representation,” or when a child hears about a dog for the first time and higher brain creates a corresponding record.⁶ Accommodation occurs when a child discovers that dogs have four legs and many breeds. Every action we take is building off of previous actions and every idea builds off the idea that came before it. In this way, we take narratives and build our own model of reality based off of what we see and hear. Narratives form our concept of the world and, as such, is intrinsically linked into who we are as people.

Narrative has had an impact on societies since the time of Ancient Greeks and Mesopotamians. Homer's narratives the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the Ancient Mesopotamian narrative, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, are some of the first instances of the narrative, illustrating the power that narrative has had.

In his book, *The Discovery of the Mind in Greek Philosophy and Literature*, Bruno Snell remarks on the discovery of self in Ancient Greek society. He writes about the how the importance of the community developed into an importance of self with the progression from

⁵ Annie Murphy Paul, “Your Brain on Fiction”, *The New York Times*, published March 17, 2012, accessed April 25, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-neuroscience-of-your-brain-on-fiction.html?_r=1&emc=eta1.

⁶ Arthur N. Applebee, *The Child's Concept of Story: Ages Two to Seventeen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 3.

epics, to lyrics, and then to drama. Epics were about heroes and that the Greek culture defined itself by its heroes. The heroes were intrinsic to the idea of community, like Achilles and Agamemnon in Homer's *Iliad*; people in this epic-centered time period identified with their communities as demonstrated by their heroes. With the introduction of lyric begins the development of 'I' and drama brings the conflict and tension between 'I' and 'others'. In this progression, we can see how narrative and its different forms directly influenced Greek society. The Greeks realized the value of these different narrative forms, their awareness of these values leading to the evolution of philosophy.⁷

In Ancient Greece, storytellers would travel from town to town and be put up in the highest ranking family's house. In return for the food and lodgings, the storyteller would recite and perform these different narratives. They would recite what was popular at that time. Even after these stories were written down, storytellers were in high demand as illiteracy was common and manuscripts were non-existent.

This change from oral tradition to written stories and the power of the narrative is what influenced me to write my thesis on my great-grandfather, Charles Leon Bravard, Sr, or Pop. In 2016 at Thanksgiving, my grandfather and his brother and sister were gathering a crowd around one of the many tables strategically arranged in my parent's basement. My family was pulling up chairs and listening to the siblings talk about their father and tell stories about his life. Everyone was talking over each other, but the siblings were so animated that they captured my attention and held it for over two hours as they told story after story of their father. That was

⁷ Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind in Greek Philosophy and Literature*, trans. T. C. Rosenmeyer (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1982).

the first time I learned about my great-grandfather Pop in such a setting rather than have to be content with catching snippets here and there. Stories about Pop have been passed down through my family yet never written down; much like how stories of the Trojan War and Odysseus' journey home were passed down through the Ancient Greeks, but not written down until generations had passed. I was inspired by family, the stories of Pop, and his sacrifices, to finally put his stories down on paper.

I was further influenced by two narratives that I read in one of my classes, *Victoire* and *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture*. I read these books for class but they stuck with me and influenced me when writing this thesis.

Victoire is written by Maryse Condé, the granddaughter of Victoire, the book's focus. Victoire was a white-skinned mestiza in the French Antilles and was born after the abolition of slavery. She worked as a servant all her life, first as a *restavek* (or child servant) in a home of a family member and then as a cook for the family of her godmother. While working in their home, she became pregnant by a man who was courting the daughter of the family. She went to work in another home where she gave birth to her daughter. She spent the rest of her life working for the Walbergs, a rich White Creole family. When her daughter finished her education and received a teaching job, Victoire moved in with her and lived there until she died.

Through reading this book, many aspects captured my attention. First, that sources can be hard to find. Condé uses a few sources such as family legend, her mother's journals, newspapers, and interviews of people who knew her mother and grandmother. However, she does not use many of these sources. She uses only three newspapers and her mother's journal

is only referenced once. Despite these few sources, she wove a story that was interesting and supplemented, at least in a few places, with sources. However, Condé assumes what her grandmother was thinking and feeling when there was no way for her to know this. Her grandmother did not know how to read or write, and thus, did not leave a journal behind for Condé to use. For example, she writes about a dream that her grandmother had, but provides no evidence to support this. Condé makes assumptions of what happened on a daily basis in her grandmother's life and regularly projected emotions and thoughts onto her character.

I will not do so in my study. I will refrain from making assumptions and speculations about what my great-grandfather thought. I will stick to the stories that people who knew him have told me and what I have found in my research. Despite the assumptions that Condé made, I will use *Victoire* as an example of how to weave the story. Condé tells a fantastic story about her grandmother's life that is entertaining and fun to read without much factual evidence. I will keep her narrative in mind while writing my great-grandfather's story, but I will include as much factual evidence as I can.

Coolie Woman: the Odyssey of Indenture was vastly different from *Victoire*. It is written by Gaiutra Bahadur and is about her great-grandmother who was an indentured servant from India to Guyana. Bahadur did not have the family legends and personal resources that Condé did and as such, did not have and could not find as much information pertaining directly to her grandmother. Rather than make conjecture as Condé did, Bahadur preferred to write her book about all indentured servants, especially the women. She repeatedly drew the story back to her great-grandmother, but included many more sources than Condé did. Since Bahadur could not trace her great-grandmother's steps, she supplemented her material by tracing the steps of

indentured women. She wrote about life before the indentured servants left, their journey, their experiences, and their return to their homeland if they were allowed to do so.

Bahadur follows indentured women as a whole and through doing this, her book is evidence based. She uses numerous sources such as documents from archives, newspapers, photos, and books. In doing so, Bahadur's book reads more like a historical work than a novel, but succeeds in describing the historical context of the story. Bahadur asked questions about her great-grandmother, but stayed away from conjecture. She inserted what she thought her great-grandmother might have thought and felt, but she made sure the reader knew that those were her opinions and not true fact. Bahadur used the information she found about her great-grandmother to find other information pertaining indirectly to her. For example, from her great-grandmother's immigration card, Bahadur discovered the name of the ship she sailed on was *The Clyde* and then looked up information pertaining to *The Clyde*.

Through reading *Coolie Woman*, I learned many ideas that I could use in my thesis. I will use newspapers and other documents to support the family stories, and I will be sure to put the stories in historical context as Bahadur does with her great-grandmother. Historical context will be key in my thesis as there are not many archival or historical documents pertaining to my great-grandfather as was the case with Bahadur and her great-grandmother.

Pop and Me



Figure 1 Map of Hancock County, 1908

I never knew my great-grandfather personally. He died eight years before I was born. I can remember when I was younger and we were driving around Hancock County, my dad, Paul Bravard, would point out a house and say “That’s where Mom and Pop lived”.⁸ One time

when we were driving on SR 9, he pointed to a driveway that went about ten feet before it ended abruptly and a field began; apparently Mom and Pop had lived there and the house had been torn down.⁹

I never met Pop but always felt like I knew him from the stories my family told. When I was young, my older family members kept talking about ‘Pop’ without explaining themselves; for years, I believed they were talking about my grandfather. It wasn’t until they began an impromptu story sharing, where they told story after

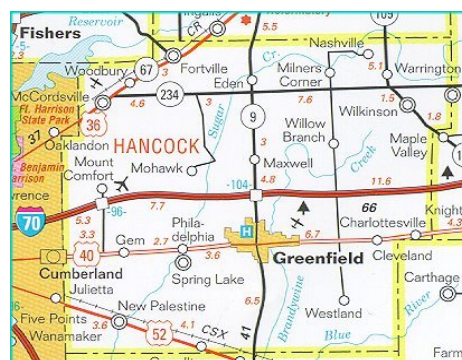


Figure 2 Map of Hancock County, 2016

story of him, that I was introduced to my great-grandfather. This journey into family history reminded my father how much he loves genealogy and he began working on our family tree and digging up family photos. When he first showed me Pop’s military picture, I thought it was a picture of my dad; they look almost exactly alike.

⁸ Figure 2: Jpatdodds, *Indiana: Hancock County, 2016, Map, Every County*, <https://everycounty.org/2016/06/15/indiana-hancock-county/>.

⁹ Figure 1: Geo. A Ogle & Co., *Hancock County, Indiana 1908 Map, 1908, Map, My Genealogy Hound*, <http://www.mygenealogyhound.com/maps/indiana-maps/IN-Hancock-County-Indiana-1908-map.html#>.

Thanksgiving of 2016 was my next major interaction with Pop and his life. My great-uncle Richard Bravard had been diagnosed with Stage 4 Pancreatic Cancer, the fourth deadliest cancer with the lowest survival rate. We all knew this was probably going to be his last Thanksgiving with us. He and his brother, Charles Bravard, sat down and told us stories about their lives and their father for over two hours. That was the moment when I decided to write about Pop for my thesis. I could see the extensive impact he and his life had on many generations.

I recorded the stories they told at Thanksgiving in 2016 and asked some of my family members more questions later. I took those recordings and transcribed them so that I have Word documents of what they said (see Appendix A). From those transcripts, I discovered a bit of who my great-grandfather was. In his childhood he was hardworking but knew how to have fun. In 1942, when he was thirty-three, he enlisted in the Army and served for almost three years, returning in 1945 to the same area of Hancock County where he lived the rest of his adult life until he died in 1989. His adult life was marked by all his different qualities and characteristics: he was childlike, a family man, had a green thumb, was helpful and ingenious, and he loved sports.

Childhood

Pop was born on March 24th, 1909 to Demosthenes Bravard and Daisy E. (Milborne) Bravard. His birth certificate gives a few interesting pieces of information.¹⁰ His name on his certificate is actually “Leon Charles Bravard,” not Charles Leon Bravard. His birth certificate

¹⁰ Appendix B, .

itself wasn't actually filed until April 29th, 1909. Birth certificates were still fairly new at this time. Virginia and Massachusetts had been trying since 1632 and 1639, respectively, to keep track of births and major life events like christenings and marriages, but the records were spotty and inaccurate. The registration law was passed in 1842 by Massachusetts. However, the first standard birth certificates were developed in 1900 by the Bureau of the Census which was established as a permanent federal government agency by a 1902 Act of Congress; this act "included a provision giving the agency statutory authority for the development of registration area for births."¹¹ These birth certificates were just being put into circulation when my great-grandfather was born and, as such, his parents may not have even been aware that they were an option. This would especially have been the case if he was born at home rather than at the hospital. Before all of this, births and other life events were only noted in church and family records.¹²

Pop had two sisters, the eldest was Mary Irma and the youngest was Ona Evaline (or Evelyn) Bravard. Mary Irma lived to an old age, but Ona died on March 5, 1922 at 14 years old. Mary Irma was well known around town for her abilities with a pistol. She was a crack shot and won many trophies and championships. Sometimes, people would challenge her by going to a tree and putting a nail in it. Mary Irma would take aim, fire, and drive the nail the rest of the way into the tree.¹³ Mary Irma was also known for not liking her brother very much. When she and Pop were grandparents, their houses were very close together, separated by only one home.

¹¹ H. L. Brumberg, D. Dozor, & S. G. Golombek, "History of the birth certificate: from inception to the future of electronic data," *Journal of Perinatology* 32, no. 407-411 (2012). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1038/jp.2012.3>.

¹² Erin Blakemore, "The History of Birth Certificates is Shorter Than You Might Think," *History Online*, last modified August 8, 2017, <https://www.history.com/news/the-history-of-birth-certificates-is-shorter-than-you-might-think>.

¹³ Appendix A, 39.

When Pop's grandchildren were old enough to walk into town on their own, his wife Ruth reminded them every time they left "Do not cross the field unannounced or she'll think you're Billy (Pop) getting in her cherries and she'll get out her gun." This was because Aunt Irma and Pop had been feuding over the apple and cherry trees for a long time. They were on the old property where they both had lived with their parents and so each felt a right to claiming them.¹⁴

Pop went to grammar school for eight years and high school for four years. Later on in his life, he stressed how important he believed that his children should finish high school. When his youngest son, William, wanted to marry his girlfriend Dorothy before turning eighteen, Pop wrote up a contract and had the two lovebirds sign it stating that he would allow them to marry only if they finished high school.

Hetty McMullen, granddaughter of Pop's sister Mary Irma, tells the story of why Pop's nuclear family called him 'Bill' when it was nothing like his given name. When Pop was nine or ten, a traveling salesman passed through Greenfield and Pop was enamored with him. Pop thought he was the best and decided that he wanted to become like this salesman, so he made his sisters call him Bill, the name of that traveling salesman.¹⁵

Pop also had another nickname given to him later in life: Rhubarb. The source of this nickname is a little unclear, but it had to do with baseball, which Pop played all throughout high school. Rhubarb is an older term meaning "baseball slang for a fight or argument among the players" which everyone agrees defines Pop, especially in sports.¹⁶ He seems to have enjoyed

¹⁴ Appendix A, 40.

¹⁵ Appendix A, 41.

¹⁶ Appendix A, 42.

being competitive and didn't mind standing up for his interpretation of what was happening and what should be happening. Pop was an intense person, which matches this intense nickname. He had an independent streak which led to competitiveness on the field, a trait that reemerged later in his life.

After high school, Pop went to work at W. J. Holliday & Co, a steel making factory in Indianapolis. He worked here until he retired. In 1954, W. J. Holliday & Co. sold the company to Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation of Pittsburgh in 1954.

Military Life

Pop enlisted in the Army on October 20th, 1942 and entered into active service on November 23rd, 1942. He served in the continental United States for 1 year, 9 months, and 18 days, according to his discharge papers.¹⁷ During this time, he attended and graduated from the Fort Crook Ordnance Automotive School at Fort Crook in Nebraska; "The courses covered all phases of automotive repair and maintenance for all types of army vehicles."¹⁸ In a postcard that he sent to his wife on July 15th, 1943, he mentions not getting paid until finishing school. He was also stationed at Camp Gruber in Oklahoma. He registered a motor vehicle on June 23rd, 1943 at Camp Gruber, was at Fort Crook in July to send his wife the postcard, and was back at Camp Gruber on August 19th to send a different postcard to his wife.¹⁹ *The Hancock Democrat* published the news article announcing his graduation on September 16th.

¹⁷ Appendix B, .

¹⁸ "Bravard Graduates", *Hancock Democrat* (Greenfield, IN), Sep. 16, 1942, url: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/95355555/?terms=bravard>

¹⁹ Appendix B, .

Being in a different place each month brought a sense of confusion that followed me into his other military paperwork, especially his discharge papers. To clear up this confusion, I met with Lieutenant Colonel Mark J. South, a professor of Military Science at Ball State.²⁰

On Pop's discharge papers, his occupation and number was listed as "Plumber 164." This confused me because my family has always said that he was a mechanic, engineer, and demolitions expert; that, combined with his training at Fort Crook, was enough to make me question his papers. I brought this up to Lt. Col. South who informed me that plumber, electricians, and demolitions. were all in the Army Corp of Engineers. This group was responsible for temporary construction and maintenance such as concrete and plumbing. They were also responsible for munitions. The Army at this time did much on-the-job-training, which they "killed" in the early 1990s. This means that someone in the Army Corp of Engineers would have been trained in various jobs. For example, they would use and train with a certain amount of explosives to gain and maintain their certifications in demolitions. Pop was in the 742nd L.M. Co. Ordnance during his time at Camp Gruber and in the 151st Ordnance Battalion. The Ordnance Corp takes care of mechanics but also handles explosives. Pop may have been listed as a 'plumber' on his discharge papers, but he certainly knew and did more.

Another contradiction between family stories and the documentary record is what unit he served with. According to the family, Pop served with the 42nd Rainbow Division, and this is supported by the fact that I have the Rainbow shoulder sleeve insignia that would have been on the soldier's jacket.²¹ During World War 2, the 42nd Rainbow Division was trained at Camp

²⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Mark J. South in discussion with the author, April 2019.

²¹ Appendix B, .

Gruber in Oklahoma beginning in July 1943 and continuing for over a year until being sent to Europe in stages from the end of 1944 to the beginning of 1945; during that time, many different men were brought in, only to be shipped out.²² It is entirely possible that Pop was trained as a part of the 42nd Rainbow Division but was separated from them when he was sent to the Pacific Theater.

He was sent to the Pacific Theater on August 29th, 1944 and arrived on September 16th, 1944. When he traveled to the Pacific, he was onboard the U.S.S. *General George M. Randall* where he became a member of the Ancient Order of the Deep.²³ He was stationed in Nouvelle Calédonie, or New Caledonia, a French colonial island in the Pacific.²⁴ It was a major support base for the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942 and later on in the Guadalcanal Campaign which took place from August 1942 to February 1943.²⁵ While Pop was there, it had numerous airfields and was maintained as an island used for island hopping,²⁶ a WWII military term for taking control of groups of islands in a chain that led to their final destination, Japan.²⁷ The United States used these islands for their planes to travel closer to Japan without having to be taken there on aircraft carriers.

The day he left the Pacific is unknown but he arrived back in the States on November 6th, 1945. At the time of his departure, he was a Technician Fifth Class.

²² Hugh C. Daly and United States Army, *42nd "Rainbow" Infantry Division: a combat history of World War II* (Louisiana: Army & Navy Publishing Company, 1946), 3-13. http://digicom.bpl.lib.me.us/www_reg_his/64.

²³ Appendix B, .

²⁴ Appendix B, .

²⁵ "New Caledonia in the two World Wars," Chemins de Mémoire, accessed April 21, 2019, <http://www.cheminsdememoire.gouv.fr/en/new-caledonia-two-world-wars>.

²⁶ Kent G. Budge, "New Caledonia," The Pacific War Online Encyclopedia, 2018, accessed April 21, 2019, https://www.pwencycl.kgbudge.com/N/e/New_Caledonia.htm.

²⁷ "Island Hopping," United States History, accessed May 3, 2019, <https://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1671.html>.

Pop didn't talk about his time in the military very often, but when he did, he was fond of telling a few stories in particular. The first was about how they were strafed badly every month on one particular day, which Pop believed coincided with the death of the Emperor's son. When it began, everybody would run to a nearby foxhole and jump in to protect themselves. They would be strafed for hours at a time. One particular time, a soldier jumped in a foxhole and landed on top of a huge snake. He had to hold on to it for two hours with people piled on top of him. It killed the snake eventually. The second story Pop loved to tell was about a poker game. Every time a new ship would come into the harbor, there would be a lot of money that they'd gambled on the ships. They would all gather in a large tent and hold a large game for the championship. One man who had a lot of money hired Pop to be his personal armed guard at a poker game. Apparently the man won a lot of money and gave Pop part of it which Pop then sent home to Ruth.²⁸

Pop also enjoyed telling his family exactly how the men came by fresh fish when they wanted it. They would go to the ocean, light some dynamite, and throw it in. The dynamite would, of course, blow up and fish would float to the top. The men would then go out on their boats and gather it all up. They didn't want to mess with nets or fishing rods; they just wanted fresh food to break up the monotony of the food they were given.²⁹ This story also supports the idea of his being trained with ordnance.

Adult Life

²⁸ Appendix A, 43.

²⁹ Appendix A, 44.

Pop was a multi-faceted man. His life wasn't defined on a year-by-year basis, but rather by the individual characteristics that made him who he was. This is why in his adult life section, I broke it up into his many characteristics: Childlike, Family Man, Green Thumb, Helpful, Ingenious, and Sporty.

Childlike

Pop was a very childlike man. His family was poor and he, like many children from that era, had to grow up fast to help out because of the Depression. He attended grammar school for eight years and high school for four years. After school, he went immediately into the workforce. When he began dating Ruth Merlau, the economic difference between them was great. Pop came from a working class family and Ruth's family was in the middle class. One year for Christmas, Ruth gave Pop an electric razor, but he couldn't use it because his family didn't have electricity. The end result was that his childlike side finally came out when he had children.

One day, when Pop's kids were teenagers, Pop decided he wanted to build a kite. In true Bravard fashion, he did not go out and buy a generic kite or build a small one, oh no. He took 2x4s and built a giant kite. His son, Charles, said that he built it out of a "twelve foot 2x4 and a twenty foot 2x4". He then covered it with plastic sheets off of the greenhouse. He hooked it to the back of the truck with steel cables he obtained from his work and told his sons to hold it while he took off with the truck. Charles and Richard held the sides and Bill held the back. Pop started off with the truck and the boys ran along with it for a while before Charles and Richard let go. Unfortunately, Bill didn't and he went with it. Apparently, Pop couldn't tell he was up there, but he eventually slowed down enough that Bill could let go before it hit the ground.

Charles said that when Bill dropped, “the kite flipped over and crashed because it didn’t have any tail.” So they made a large tail out of big sticks and tried flying the kite again.³⁰

A few years later when Pop’s boys were old enough to drive but not old enough to have their licenses, there was a snow day for school. Pop told them that if they wanted to go visit some people during the day, he would drive. They didn’t just visit their friends, though. Instead, they took two full-sized telephone poles and nailed them together with pacing board from front to back and hooked it to Pop’s pickup with log chains. They decided to visit their friends in style and built a sled that would let them do just that. Richard’s job was to be the brakes; so he sat at the front and every time Pop stopped, Richard put his feet up to catch the back of the pickup truck so that they “didn’t slid under and kill everybody,” according to Charles. Once they were ready, they set out throughout the entire county stopping at houses and giving people rides. They didn’t ride just on the road, they went wherever the truck could make it. Richard said that “From all the houses, they’d [the people] call each other and say, “They’re coming down your road, get a ride!”” It wasn’t just kids jumping on and hitching a ride, it was adults as well. One such adult was a farmer. On one turn, Pop took it too tight and they knocked out that farmer’s entire corner post. Everybody “flopped” around but were not hurt. When the boys told the farmer they would come back and fix the post, he said, ““Ah, that was so damn much fun, don’t worry about it! I’ll fix it tomorrow.””³¹

My great-aunt Marijo, Pop’s daughter, tells a slightly different story. In her telling, the youngest were at the front and the oldest were at the back because when the truck turned, the

³⁰ Appendix A, 45.

³¹ Appendix A, 46.

people at the back had to hold on really well or they would swing around and fall off. Instead of putting their feet up to stop the sled from flying under the truck, there was a stopper there. However, Marijo is younger and seems to be remembering an updated version of the sled that Chuck, Richard, and Bill built.³²

Family Man

Pop was a family-oriented man. He cared for his family and was adamant about being the one providing for them. He took care of his wife and children, but if his kids disobeyed him or acted out, he disciplined them. When his children grew up and had kids of their own, Pop loved to be with his grandchildren and teach them all kinds of life lessons. He put them to work and taught them the value of hard earned money.

He loved his wife very much. When Pop's sons were married and had children, he needed their help another time. He had heard of a glass greenhouse that had closed in Charlottesville and conscripted his sons to go, bring it back, and put it up for their mom because, as Charles says, Pop said, "Your mom's been out there in those plastic greenhouses *years* now. Wouldn't it be nice if she had a *real* greenhouse and we could get it for *free*?" So, Charles and Richard went to Charlottesville, tore down the greenhouse, and hauled it back to Greenfield and put it up. All in February. They heated the putty from a small fire at the bottom of the greenhouse and used it to attach the glass, along with two "little bitty nail(s)." Richard says that he had bought a brand new truck to haul all the glass, which wasn't a new experience for him; Richard loved

³² Appendix A, 49.

buying new vehicles. They claimed that Bill didn't help them because he was afraid the house would fall on him.³³

When his grandchildren were old enough to be work, Pop put them to it. He didn't stop at teaching his children the value of hard work he continued to teach that value to his grandchildren. Two of his grandchildren, Julie and Paul, spoke about how Pop would always ask them, "You wanna make some money?" They said how he would work them all day, and at the end, he'd give them a quarter every time. They said that when they stayed at Grandpa's, they either worked or played on the "big wheel", a large tire in the yard, and eventually they grew too old for that.³⁴

Green Thumb

When Ruth was growing up, her family had greenhouses. When she was married, she brought her love for plants to her new husband. For the majority of their time owning the greenhouses, Ruth was the one in charge and working in them because Pop was working at the steel factory. However, after he retired from them, he brought more to the greenhouses. He introduced hot beds and a vegetable truck to their business; he was also the market



Figure 3 Pop at his 70th birthday party with his 'Official Market Master' shirt.

³³ Appendix A, 50.

³⁴ Appendix A, 53.

master for many years. As market master, he had many duties including promoting the farmer's market and organizing the weekly event.

At the greenhouses that Pop and Ruth owned, they had hot beds. Pop would sell the vegetables they grew in these hot beds. Richard Bravard described it this way, "When you went into the store, he'd say "Well, how you doing today? Let's go down through here and see what you *need*." He would take a flat (and say), "Oh, well you need *this* and you need *this* and you need some of them too." All through the garden, he wouldn't give you time to take a breath. He would have you full up with two armfuls of crap including fertilizer and everything in the world".³⁵

Pop had an old El Camino type truck that he used for a few years to drive around and sell vegetables door to door when the greenhouse season ended in July. He would plant everything that was left, and when it was ready, he picked it and go around the county selling it and taking orders.³⁶ People always knew when Pop was coming around with his truck, because he had taken a large cast iron bell and had Richard weld it to the top of the truck. So when he came around the corner, it went BONG. Julie said that "when he's driving the car, you know so you can avoid it so you cannot let people know that *that is* your grandfather." She also told fond(ish) memories of driving around town with him, in this El Camino from which he sold vegetables and had a large bell on it, to find his teeth. Many times this ended with him reaching into his pocket and saying, "Oh, there they are".³⁷

³⁵ Appendix A, 53.

³⁶ Appendix A, 55.

³⁷ Appendix A, 56.

Pop was the Market Master for the farmer's market in Greenfield. The first recording of his role as market master was in 1978, and he served in that position for many years.³⁸ He also sold produce at the farmer's market and he enlisted his grandchildren's help. Two such grandchildren, Julie Bravard and Paul Bravard, tell fond(ish) memories of working with their grandfather at the farmer's market.

Julie spoke about how he would take a pocket knife and would cut out a part of a tomato that looked like it may turn soon. He would then sell that tomato to the next person at a discount.

Paul spoke about how he and Pop would drive up in the vegetable truck and park at the farmer's market. Paul would then sit in a chair with the money box and sell the vegetables while Pop went off to do "Market Master stuff." Charles, Pop's son and Paul's father, cut in to tell Paul that Pop actually went over to a restaurant and eat hamburgers in the nice air conditioning while Paul sweated it out in a hundred degree weather.³⁹

Helpful

Pop was a very helpful man. He prided himself on being a productive member of his community that contributed to the betterment of the people around him. He was involved in a variety of organizations: Mt. Lebanon Methodist Church, Fountaintown Fire Department, Senior Citizens Center, and United Senior Action. A few stories that his children enjoy telling are about

³⁸ "Farmers Market starts Saturday", *Daily Reporter*, Aug 4, 1878, url: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/159170180>.

³⁹ Appendix A, 58.

how he raised money for Mt. Lebanon, he helped an older woman with her house, and he defended his black neighbors against the KKK.

Mt. Lebanon Methodist Church needed a new addition to serve as a community building that could be used for weddings and other various functions, a place for people to congregate and have fellowship. The other church members moaned and groaned about the work and cost such an addition would undoubtedly need. Pop managed to convince them by saying that he would get the cement, the iron, everything they would need donated. All the church would have to do was pay for the windows and get neighbors to help build it. They still dragged their feet so Pop said that they should start making money and then they could decide what to do with it.

They decided to have a smorgasbord, a big pitch-in meal where members of the church brought different meats, pies, potato salad, and other dishes and invited the community to come eat for so much money a plate. The first smorgasbord they had did well, but Pop thought they needed to increase it. They went to a man who owned about eighty acres of field land across from the church; the land and church were divided by State Road 9 and the land had a fence around it with two large gates through which the farmer could get his combines through.

Pop told the church that he would get tents, and they could lease the property and have a huge smorgasbord that the entire county could join in. Richard Bravard said that Pop sent his kids out all summer “running around with flyers on our bikes to everybody’s house, sticking stuff in mailboxes, putting it in doors all over the county”.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Appendix A, 61.

When the time for the smorgasbord came, Pop secured tent donations from his boss at W. J. Holiday who was known as Old Man Holiday. Holiday donated these huge circus tents that he had but told Pop that if he damaged them, he would have to pay for them. The tents were so large that only one of them would fit into the back of a full-sized pickup truck, and they had to use farm tractors to pull the poles up and set up the tents.

The day came for the first smorgasbord; the church had scheduled three days. The first day came and signs were placed all up and down the road; people came and when the day was over, they had done pretty well. The next day, the Methodist Youth Group overheard the church members speaking about how it would be nice if they could figure out a way to get the traffic from SR 9 to stop in at the smorgasbord.

The children got an idea. They went out into the middle of the road, one of the busiest roads in Hancock Country, and waved them through the gates and into the fields. That way every single car on that road that day had to pass through the smorgasbord and many of them stayed to eat. Some of them were even from out of state. By the time the people figured out what was going on, they were interested and generous.

When Pop found out about this, he went and bought big, floppy, brightly colored hats and flashlights for the kids. He told them, "You know it's gonna get dark tonight," but he denied ever doing that. He never admitted to doing this and denied all knowledge of the plan throughout his entire life. I don't know why he would do this, perhaps to stay out of trouble with his wife or to feel like he was in cahoots with his kids, but for whatever reason, he did.

The church members at the smorgasbord were so busy, that they didn't even have time to wonder about why all those people were there. The women were running back and forth

from their homes to cook food and bring it over because of such a large demand. One of the desserts that they were offering was ice cream from the Greenfield Ice Cream Company. They had sold out of ice cream and had to call the company to bring an entire truck full of ice cream so that they could continue to sell it. The entire day was spent doing this until eleven at night when they decided to stop.

The next day they decided to continue with the smorgasbord even though they were nearly out of food. However, the kids had decided they'd helped enough and were not waving people through the gates anymore. So about halfway through the day, everyone was wondering where all the people were.

Three days later, the adults had recuperated from the event and were trying to figure out why everybody had stopped. One of the kids fessed up and told them that the Methodist Youth Group had been out in the middle of road waving all the cars in. The adults were beside themselves with anger and worry. Eventually they got over it because they realized they had made enough money to buy the rest of the supplies and pay someone else to build the addition.⁴¹

Another story that Pop's children love to tell is about how when they were about fourteen or fifteen, an old woman who lived in Greenfield was being threatened by a man who lived next door. The man had just moved in and had the property surveyed; he found out that her house stuck over the property line about a foot and half onto his property. He told her that she either had to move or sign the house over to him.

⁴¹ Appendix A, 60.

Now she didn't have any money, but somehow Pop heard of her plight and decided to help her out by moving her house back onto her property. It didn't matter that he had no idea how to move a house and had never done it before; it was his duty to help his neighbors. He went to a neighbor down the road, Ed Boyer, who was a house mover and told him about the situation. Ed loaned him all that he would need to move the house.

When they were ready to move the house, they realized they needed a foundation, so they built one. Then with a boy on each corner and Pop at one, they were ready to move the house again until they realized that the gas and the water line, which were under the house, were still hooked up and wouldn't stretch. So Pop went to get special tubing and crawled under the house to unhook the lines and attach the flex hoses so that the lines would reach to the new location.

Once that was finished, they jacked up the house and told the woman who lived there to watch and yell when the house slid over and lined up with the new foundation. So they slid the rails under the other rails so that they could slide the house over and got ready to move the house. Then they realized that they had laid the blocks straight across and the house wouldn't have laid on the foundation because the rails would be on the blocks. They had to knock down two of the blocks so that the rails would be out of the way and the house could drop onto the foundation.

Pop had two huge steel 'things' that men who worked on the railroad used to move cars around. So Pop and Bill had one and Richard and Charles had the other. They put them underneath the beams on the house and used them to lift the house up so it could slide downhill onto the new foundation. They finally got the house onto the new foundation but

realized that some problems still needed to be fixed, such as the fact that the house had no anchor holds. They had to take the blocks out and Pop drilled holes in, put bolts in the holes and filled them in with cement.⁴²

Pop had no idea how to move a house, which is evident by how often they had to stop and start over, but he knew he had to help his neighbor. Pop and his sons moved that woman's house so that she didn't have to give it to that man or move out. She lived in that house until the day she died. Pop helped a neighbor, but he also taught his sons the value of looking after others. Richard also said, "That was when the Bravard boys understood what preparation means".⁴³

Pop first taught his children the value and necessity of looking after neighbor's years before all this when he had just returned from the war. Pop and his family lived on 500 South next to one of the only two African American families in the vicinity. At the same time, the leader of the Ku Klux Klan, the Grand Dragon, also lived in the county. You're not supposed to know who the Grand Dragon is, but Pop found out. Pop believed that people should be treated equally and especially wanted his neighbors to be treated well.

Pop packed his family in the car and drove over to the Grand Dragon's house and told him not to bother or harass his neighbors. Pop could be a scary man when he was truly mad. That man must have seen that because he never bothered or harassed the neighbors the entire time that they lived there.⁴⁴

⁴² Appendix A, 66.

⁴³ Appendix A, 70.

⁴⁴ Appendix A, 72.

Pop was a helpful man who spent his life taking care of his family and his neighbors. He cared deeply about the people and community around him. He spent much of his time working to make a better life and community for them.

Ingenious

Pop was not only helpful, he was also an ingenious person, especially when it came to plants. He earned extra money with his family by selling Christmas trees and also solved a problem concerning their hot beds.

Pop somehow obtained Christmas trees for free and decided to plant them in rows on their property. Ten years later, they were big enough to sell at Christmas trees. Pop offered a whole service with the trees; he sent his children to go dig the holes, bale them, and send them home with the customer. Eventually, the trees grew too large to fit in the customer's homes so he had his children climb up the trees, cut the top off, and sell that. He found a way to get even more money out of trees he had received for free.⁴⁵

At the greenhouses that Pop and Ruth owned, they had hot beds. Hot beds are essentially where you make a large rectangle out of some material, like wood, and you fill it with dirt, sand, and horse manure. You then cover it with glass windowpanes to keep the heat in. You use horse manure because it's hot, but not as hot as chicken manure which will burn up your plants, and it helps the plants to grow.

At the greenhouse, they grew sweet potatoes in their hot beds because they were a big seller. After a few years, however, they began running out of horse manure because people no

⁴⁵ Appendix A, 76.

longer owned horses. So Pop came up with the idea to put electric coils into the sand and dirt as a substitute for the horse manure. It did the same job as the horse manure.⁴⁶

Pop was an ingenious man who solved problems that he and his family faced. He overcame the obstacles that they faced and, at the same time, taught his children and grandchildren to think innovatively and develop their own ingenuity.

Sporty

All throughout his life, Pop enjoyed sports. He loved playing baseball throughout high school and received his nickname Rhubarb because of his quick temper, especially when it came to baseball. Pop also enjoyed playing pool a great deal; he was extremely good at it as he also was at baseball.

Pop's father, Demosthenes, was extremely good at baseball. He was offered a chance to play with the big leagues, but he turned them down because he made more money playing for his community on the weekend. Pop was offered to play in the big leagues for St. Louis, but he declined because he injured his shoulder in the war.⁴⁷ Despite being injured, he learned to water ski when he was seventy two.⁴⁸ Both Demosthenes and Pop were mentioned many times in the papers for their baseball playing abilities.

Pop loved playing baseball, but he also enjoyed playing pool. He earned a lot of money off of it by doing what his father did. The nearby towns would pay Pop to come and play the other towns pros in trick shots. One time, they played at Buckley's in Cumberland, which is

⁴⁶ Appendix A, 78.

⁴⁷ Appendix A, 79.

⁴⁸ Appendix A, 80.

where the Greek restaurant Sero's currently is. The community pooled their money and backed Pop going to the big game there. All the players would compete until there were only four people left and then would have a shoot off with a trick shot. This particular trick shot consisted of the players jumping over four balls spaced out to hit three other balls in the pocket.

Charles describes it like this: "So here comes Pop and he chalks her up, and he had his own white pool cue ball. He had her shined up, his was made out of ivory. He put her down there. He got ready. He popped it and that sucker went over the top; it hit that front ball at an angle, knock that one in, bounced over, knock the other one in, and then hit a rail and knocked the one over here in".⁴⁹ Pop was the talk of the town for a long time. He was their "champ", and he used the money to build the house that he would move in with his new bride. Pop and Ruth were not married yet but then, as Charles said, "Mom and Dad got married, Pop got religion, quit shooting ball and they damn near starved to death".⁵⁰

Pop quit playing pool for years until he and Ruth started going to the senior center. Some of the people there told Pop they didn't believe he could still do what they heard he had done. So he told them to put their government checks in the pocket, and he'd show them what he could do. Eventually, he was barred from playing pool there because he was taking their entire social security checks.

Late Adult Life and Death

⁴⁹ Appendix A, 81.

⁵⁰ Appendix A, 82.

When Pop was very old, after his children married and had kids, he grew more ornery than usual. He had diabetes but did not manage it well which made him temperamental and somewhat dangerous. He went into a retirement home because his wife was scared of what he would do with his uncontrolled diabetes and couldn't take care of him.

Pop died on January 30th, 1989 at 7:55 PM in Greenfield, IN at 79 years old. His immediate causes of death were an acute myocardial infarction, advanced arteriosclerosis obliterans, diabetes mellitus, and ischemic leg.⁵¹⁵² He was buried in Mt. Lebanon Cemetery on February 2, 1989.

The only way to preserve these stories and their importance is to write them down. These stories show how my great-grandfather shaped our family by giving his children an example of the hard-working, caring people that he wanted them to be. That has been passed down through the generations to me and my cousins. History has always been a passion of mine and I am proud to have part of my family's written down.

⁵¹ An acute myocardial infarction is a heart attack. Advanced arteriosclerosis obliterans is when arteries are obstructed. "Arteriosclerosis Obliterans," ScienceDirect, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/arteriosclerosis-obliterans>. Diabetes mellitus is more commonly known as diabetes which is when somebody's body can't produce insulin on its own. An ischemic leg is when the leg doesn't get enough blood flow or oxygen. "Critical Limb Ischemia (CLI)," Vascular Cures, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://vascularcures.org/critical-limb-ischemia-cli/>.

⁵² Appendix B, .

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Audio Interview Transcription
Mary Irma
Personal Interview – April 19th, 2019

Charles Bravard, Jr: As far as Aunt Irma, did you know she was a nurse?

Alex Bravard: No, I know nothing about Aunt Irma.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Aunt Irma was a nurse. The thing that set her apart was, she was a crack shot. She had won many trophies and championships with pistols. And people would challenge her. They would take a tree so many steps away and drive a nail into the tree and she would take her gun and drive the nail all the way into the tree. It was a huge gun. She was a crack shot.

Paul Bravard: She just didn't like her brother

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, she didn't.

**Audio Interview Transcription
Cherry and Apple Feud
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

Julie Bravard: [We were told] “Do not cross the field unannounced or she’ll think you’re Billy getting in her cherries and she’ll get out her gun.”

Hetty McMullen: Who’d you hear that from?

Julie Bravard: Grandma.

Hetty McMullen: Oh, that is so true.

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: Grandma’s like “You be careful, you girls.” ‘Cause when we’re going down to Neb’s to get some penny candy, “Don’t cut through there.” ‘Cause her house was just south.

Richard Bravard: ‘Cause your grandpa and his sister had been feuding over the apples and cherries.

Charles Bravard, Jr: ‘Cause the apple and cherry trees were on the old property.

Audio Interview Transcription
Nickname – Bill
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Hetty McMullen: Why Grandma and Helen and they all called him [Charles] Bill was because (of) the salesman that went through Greenfield when he was like nine or ten and he was just enamored with him. He thought he was like, the man, and that was who he wanted to be and he made his sisters call him Bill.

Audio Interview Transcription
Nickname – Rhubarb
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: And they called him Rhubarb.

Susan Bravard: They called him Rhubarb?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Uh-huh. Cause he couldn't pronounce Bravard.

Linda Bravard: -behind the dry cleaners in Greenfield. [unintelligible] I worked for him during high school. I had Rick with me and I stopped in there one time and he said "Well you got a little Rhubarb there."

[laughter]

Linda Bravard: He says "Yeah, his grandpa we called Rhubarb in high school."

Richard Bravard: He played every sport. They called him Rhubarb, uh, because there was a Rhubarb deal in baseball.

Charles Bravard, Jr: I'm trying to remember what it is.

Susan Bravard: There's no Rhubarb Valentine.

Richard Bravard: No, no, no. It doesn't have to do with a person.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Ah, here's what it is. You know they used to call him Rhub, remember? And they tied the two words together and it became Rhubarb. He was playing baseball and they'd say "Hey Rhub, what're you doing there?" Anyways, they connected it.

Richard Bravard: Where's Jywanza? He would know.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And we thought it was kinda weird, okay?

Richard Bravard: But it had to do with baseball.

Paul Bravard: Okay, Rhubarb is baseball slang for a fight or argument among the players-

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, that would be Pop.

[laughter]

Audio Interview Transcription
Army
Personal Interview – April 19th, 2019

Alex Bravard: Did he tell you any stories about his service during the war?

Charles Bravard, Jr: The only thing he told me was (that) he was stationed in the South Pacific. And because they had killed the emperor's son, two months before, and so every month after that, on the day he was killed, they would fly in and strafe the island for hours. And people had to jump in the foxholes to protect themselves. One guy jumped in and landed on one of the big snakes and had to hold on to it for almost two hours and everybody's piled on top of him and I think it killed the snake. And the rest of it was, when the ships would come into the harbor they would have all this money that they'd gambled on the ships and so they'd all gather in a large tent and go for the money championship. And Pop did MP part of the time so one of the guys who had the big sack of money wanted him to be his armed guard and Pop did. Well the guy won a lot of money and he gave Pop a big percentage of it and he sent it home and that's what they built their first house with.

Audio Interview Transcription
Army – Fishing
Personal Interview – April 19th, 2019

Charles Bravard, Jr: You throw this dynamite in the water and blow up, get all these fish that'd float to the top and they'd go out on boats and gather it all up because they didn't want to mess with nets. If they hadn't done that, they were forced to eat what your dad had to eat, stuff like that. But they wanted fresh food.

Audio Interview Transcription
Kite
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

- Richard Bravard:** Oh, let me tell you, Pop was a kid. He wanted to build a kite one day.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** And it got bigger and bigger and bigger.
- Paul Bravard:** Oh, the one that was a mile long?
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** It was so big. He took 2x4s and built this big, giant kite and covered it with canvas type stuff and we tried it. He said, "You guys hold on to it and I'll take off with the truck and then we'll wheel it." Where he worked he got steel cables cause it was a steel company. They basically give it to him. Wasn't it Bill that didn't let loose and it went up with him?
- Richard Bravard:** He was the tail guy, you're right. He was the tail guy.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah. We're holding onto the two sides and Bill's got the bottom and we're taking off down the road. And the kite went up and it did fly, but Bill went with it. 'Course, Pop couldn't tell he was up there. Finally, he slowed down enough, and I think he slowed down enough it didn't kill him.
- Richard Bravard:** He jumped off before it hit the ground.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah, but anyways it was taking him up. He let loose finally I think is what happened. But I know it didn't feel good when he hit the ground.
- Richard Bravard:** But it was plastic off the greenhouse.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah, it was two sheets. And then of course when Bill let go, the kite flipped over and crashed because it didn't have any tail. So eventually we made a big tail with big sticks on it and tried it again.
- Susan Bravard:** How wide was the kite? How far apart?
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** It was a twelve foot 2x4 and a twenty foot 2x4.

Audio Interview Transcription
First Sled
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: Your Uncle Rich [Richard Bravard] was the brakes. What we did is we nailed two full-sized telephone poles together with pacing boards about that far apart all the way to the back, put chains on the front, hooked it onto the back of Pop's pickup-

Julie Bravard: Now describe these chains because these weren't like-

Richard Bravard: Oh, these were large-

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, we're talking log chains.

Richard Bravard: Took two guys to drag 'em to the truck.

Charles Bravard, Jr: We hooked those babies on with the big eyeholes and everything was cool. Rich was on the front, he was leaned back with his legs and when we stopped he put his feet to catch the back of the pickup truck so we didn't slid under and kill everybody.

[laughter]

Susan Bravard: Decapitate.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, decapitate. And then we drove through the entire county on that sled and we stopped at houses.

Richard Bravard: We was out eight and a half hours.

Charles Bravard, Jr: People in the county-

Richard Bravard: From all the houses, they'd call each other and say "They're coming down your road, get a ride!"

Charles Bravard, Jr: And they'd jump on-

Susan Bravard: Adults as well as kids.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well yeah, some of these people were our age practically, jumping on.

Susan Bravard: I would have jumped on.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And finally we came around one corner, I gotta remember what happened. We hit the post – oh, it was one of the farmers – we knocked his entire corner post off, flopped everybody around, nobody got really hurt, got it back up, got on it, and we said “We’ll come fix the post”. He said “Ah, that was so damn much fun, don’t worry about it! I’ll fix it tomorrow.”

Susan Bravard: So he was on the sled?

Charles Bravard, Jr: He was on the sled. [laughter] And so he-

Susan Bravard: But Uncle Richards legs were the only thing-

Charles Bravard, Jr: He was the brakes.

Susan Bravard: -that kept every family in the county from having their head cut off.

Richard Bravard: I saved all them lives.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, but you gotta remember-

Richard Bravard: I tell you what, if I hadn’t then I would have been first.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: That’s why he was able to do it, he didn’t care to die. But anyway-

Susan Bravard: Well, think about the momentum.

Richard Bravard: Pop was driving. We barely was on the road, most of the times we was in the fields. I mean, we was snowed in.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Wherever there was snow and the truck could pull it, we went.

Julie Bravard: But now, is this the same snow that you sledded out of the top floor of the house?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Oh, that was a different snow.

Alex Bravard: Did you guys make the sled or did Pop make the sled?

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, we made it.

Richard Bravard: The kids made it because Pop, if he would drive it, we wanted to go visit some people while it [school] was out for snow.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, Pop of course said, "Okay, alright."

Richard Bravard: Like I said, he said "Everybody live forever, you're invincible." He lived his life.

Charles Bravard, Jr: You gotta remember that these chains were long, there was at least, what, 10 foot of chain?

Richard Bravard: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Charles Bravard, Jr: So when he [Pop] hit the brakes that's why he [Richard] had to brake us because we'd slide under the whole truck.

Alex Bravard: So how old were you?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Oh, we were old.

Richard Bravard: Yeah, yeah, we could drive the truck but Dad wouldn't let us.

Charles Bravard, Jr: We weren't licensed.

Audio Interview Transcription
Sled
Personal Interview – December 21st, 2018

Marijo Carr: Did your grandpa or your dad ever tell you about sleigh rides on the back of the truck?

Alex Bravard: Sometimes, but I'd like to hear your story.

Marijo Carr: So, here's the thing. He had an old pickup truck and he built a sleigh. Now, we're not talking about a little tiny sleigh, we're talking about a sleigh that could hold up to probably, I would say, up to about ten people on the back of it. He'd hook it onto the back of the truck and then he would take all of us kids around the neighborhood. 'Course, back then there wasn't a whole lot of cars, it was country, so really you hardly ever met a car. So he'd take us all through the county, and it wouldn't just be us kids. He'd go round and pick up the neighbor kids and we'd go riding. Now you'd get sued for that of course, if somebody fell off. But then, it wasn't a big deal. You know, you go to somebody's house and then that's their tough luck. If they got hurt then that was their problem. But anyway, and the neighbors knew that he was doing this and they're fine with it. But you would be in order. The eldest one would be towards, okay, you'd start with me and the younger ones, because I was considered one of the younger ones, and we'd be up closer to the front of the truck. And then it would go older, older, older. 'Cause if you were on the back when he turned, you had to hold on really good because it was so long, it would swing you around there and you would fall off. So you would be in order of age when you rode it.

Alex Bravard: So was the youngest at the front?

Marijo Carr: Yeah.

Alex Bravard: And they would put the feet up to stop it?

Marijo Carr: Well, it had a place for your feet, it had a stopper, so you wouldn't fly off the front and fly under the truck. So he had like a stopper there. But the people on the back, so yeah. Richard would really have some stories because I think he fell off a time or two. You know, you could only go so far or whatever. I mean, we didn't stay out but, I don't know, probably an hour. Probably rode around for an hour. And, you know, sounds like a real long time, but you gotta figure you couldn't go real super-fast. So by the time you went to pick up the kids and do the little loop or whatever, it was about an hour or so.

**Audio Interview Transcription
Building Greenhouse for Ruth
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

Charles Bravard, Jr: Where did we get the glass and who got the glass for the greenhouse?

Richard Bravard: Oh, all that glass.

Charles Bravard, Jr: There was a glass greenhouse that closed in Charlottesville. And Pop said "I can get this for *free* and your mom," 'cause of course it was our mom, "your mom's been out there in those plastic greenhouses *years* now. Wouldn't it be nice if she had a *real* greenhouse and we could get it for *free*?" So we go and we're haulin'-tearin' the greenhouse down and we're bringin' it back. It's February, we're up there [at the top of the side of the greenhouse] with a fire down here [at the bottom of the side] heatin' the putty to put the glass in. And each piece of glass had to put in a little bitty nail and lay it down, another bitty nail to hold it and then we puttied it in, remember?

Richard Bravard: Oh boy, do I.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: And there we are.

Richard Bravard: I bought a brand new truck to hold all the glass and I remember-

Julie Bravard: Dad, how old were you when you decided to put small panes of glass in in February?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Oh, we were married.

Richard Bravard: Married and had kids.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, and we-

Susan Bravard: Pop knew no age.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And we couldn't get Bill to help us. 'Cause he was afraid the house would probably fall on 'im, I don't know.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: But anyway, we're out there putting these panes in and it turned out to be a really nice greenhouse.

Richard Bravard: He [Bill] always had somebody else put it up.

**Audio Interview Transcription
Working the Grandkids
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

- Julie Bravard:** We would work all day.
- Paul Bravard:** All day.
- Julie Bravard:** ‘Cause Pop were real good about saying “You wanna make some money?”
- Paul Bravard:** Yep.
- Julie Bravard:** Yeah, sure, yeah. He work you all day like a *dog* and you get 25 cents. That was it. Never went up, ever.
- Richard Bravard:** Don’t spend it all in one place.
- Julie Bravard:** Don’t matter what work you did, no matter what job it was, whether you were digging holes-
- Susan Bravard:** Question is, why did you keep saying you want to work?
- Hetty McMullen:** Right, that’s what I wanna know.
- Julie Bravard:** Because people would say “Go up and work for Grandpa.”
- Paul Bravard:** You did not have a choice. You stayed at Grandpa’s, you worked.
- Julie Bravard:** Yeah, it was that or the big wheel and you eventually get too old for the big wheel. Before you could walk five miles to next door.

Audio Interview Transcription
Hot Bed – Selling
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Richard Bravard: You go to the store. You go in there, you do a little bit of shopping. You grab this, you grab that and you decide, “Well, I’m gonna buy that”. You didn’t shop that way in my day. When you went into the store, he’d [Pop’d] say “Well how you doing today? Let’s go down through here and see what you *need*.” He would take a flat, “Oh, well you need *this* and you need *this* and you need some of them too.” All through the garden, wouldn’t give you time to take a breath. He would have you full up with two armfuls of crap including fertilizer and everything in the world. Have you wrung up and he’d say-

Charles Bravard, Jr: And they bought into it.

Julie Bravard: But he would go down into that hot bed, into that manure-

Richard Bravard: And give them handfuls.

Julie Bravard: -and into that nastiness with them snakes and all that nasty and doo and that smell and *ugh*. And that stuff that don’t really look like plants yet, and throw with this stuff that looked like it ought to be garbage and wrap it up.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, that’s so the plants would live.

Richard Bravard: It’s pure nitrogen, that’s what it is. You’re not supposed to stick your hands into it, it’s pure nitrogen.

Julie Bravard: And he would wrap this us. Now, you wonder bout these people that would come, they was like dressed to the nines sometimes. These ladies in their heels and dresses and whatnot.

Richard Bravard: And they just loved it.

Julie Bravard: Yeah, and they loving it up.

Richard Bravard: This was the *real* world. And they’d ask what it was and he’s say “It’s a special medicine for them.”

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: And he just making up prices, too. You don't even know how much that it. (Pop would say) "Oh, it's just a bundle of this and it's this much, and a bundle of this."

**Audio Interview Transcription
Vegetable Truck, Greenhouse
Personal Interview – December 21st, 2018**

Marijo Carr: After the greenhouse business was over, he'd plant the vegetables-

Alex Bravard: After they sold the greenhouse?

Marijo Carr: No, after they got done with the season of the greenhouse. In other words, we were closed for the season. He'd take what was left and he'd plant it out in the back and then grow the vegetables from it.

Alex Bravard: When did the season end?

Marijo Carr: Usually July. We were usually done by July 4th. So then he'd plant everything that was left, or we would, and then when it matured, he would pick it all. And he had a truck that had the. It was an old truck that he had built a vegetable cart, I guess you'd call it, onto the back and then he would go around to different peoples houses and he would take orders and he would also have stuff he'd sell right then on the spot. But then he'd go to different people, and they were like in his area, I guess you would call it, I don't know how far he went, that part I never did get involved with it as far as riding with him. But anyway, he would go out and he would sell vegetables, take the orders and whatever. But it would be like tomatoes and cabbage and whatever he grew, he had a large variety of things. But he'd do that every year for several years. So it was a way that he would get more money out of produce that he grew. That's my dad. But yeah, he had a bell, he had a big ole bell on it that he would ring when he came so that they'd know he was there. He'd ring the bell so that they knew he was out there and they'd come and buy the vegetables or whatever. He did that for several years actually, probably five or six years. He didn't do it as long as the greenhouse was open, this was something he did towards the end there when he got older.

Audio Interview Transcription
Vegetable Truck
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

- Paul Bravard:** Hey, I spent many a farmer's market with that vegetable truck.
- Julie Bravard:** I mean that El Camino with the sides-
- Paul Bravard:** Yes, that's the vegetable truck.
- Julie Bravard:** And how many times would he go looking for the teeth? There's nothing worse than driving your grandpa around town looking for teeth, stopping places looking for his teeth, and then he goes down into his pocket and pulls them out and goes "Oh, there they are."
- Paul Bravard:** Hey, that vegetable truck? It's like a hundred degrees out and-
- Julie Bravard:** And then, I remember he pulls up with the vegetable truck and it's got that big wooden thing on the back, right? And he's pulling the wooden thing off to reveal cast iron black bell, right? And he says, "Rich. I need you to weld this on top" And he tells Dad that he's gotta weld this bell, that must weigh three times what this El Camino weighs, on top of the truck because he- The El Camino, calling it a truck is giving it too much kindness.
- Paul Bravard:** That's true.
- Julie Bravard:** And this El Camino, that he's painted with a brush okay, and it's got this white A-frame type deal in the back, right?
- Charles Bravard, JR:** It's for his vegetable display.
- Julie Bravard:** Right. And this bell must be mounted, not just mounted but welded, on the top because people aren't paying enough attention-
- Paul Bravard:** I hated that bell.
- Julie Bravard:** -to the truck, to buy the vegetables.
- Charles Bravard, JR:** BONG
- Paul Bravard:** I hated that bell.

Julie Bravard: And he would turn the corner then- And Dad, being the good child, made sure the bell was welded to the car. That was the worst thing, that he does weld it. And so then when he's driving the car, you know so you can avoid it so you cannot let people know that *that is* your grandfather. You know, cause when he turns it, it goes BONG and you know that that's your grandfather.

Charles Bravard, JR: Hey, he sold a lot of vegetables that way.

Richard Bravard: He did.

Charles Bravard, JR: He did. People would come out of their houses-

Richard Bravard: He'd go up, put vegetables on people's porches and go.

Audio Interview Transcription
Farmer's Market
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

- Julie Bravard:** Yeah, he's come up at the farmer's market, we'd be standing there – [to Paul] how many time's you'd be standing there? – and he'd get out of them nasty pants, they weren't even khaki anymore. Oh, no. They had so many stains that they couldn't even be called khaki. They got mercurochrome all down one side and I don't know on them pockets. And anyway, and he'd get this – [to Charles and Richard] I think he probably had this pocket knife since before y'all were born – he'd get that pocket knife out-
- Paul Bravard:** Yeah
- Julie Bravard:** Yeah, and he'd cut out a part of a tomato that looked like it might be turning-
- Paul Bravard:** And then sell it.
- Julie Bravard:** -and then sell that tomato to the next person that came by, at a discount.
- Paul Bravard:** This is what he'd do-
- Julie Bravard:** Yeah
- Paul Bravard:** -he was the Market Master.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah
- Julie Bravard:** Yeah
- Paul Bravard:** So we'd pull up in this El Camino, you know, and we'd park. And he'd set me up in my chair with my little money box and he'd go off and do Market Master stuff. And I'd sit there with that stupid bell and those rotten tomatoes and sell 'em. Who knows where he would go.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Well, he went over, lot of times he'd go over to where your mom cooked and he'd go into that restaurant and he'd get those nice hamburgers and eat 'em.
- Paul Bravard:** So I'd sit there and it'd be a hundred degrees out, sweatin' in the sun with no shade-

Charles Bravard, Jr: And he'd come back and you'd be "Where'd ya go?" and he says "I dunno"

**Audio Interview Transcription
Fundraising for Mt. Lebanon
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

Richard Bravard: Does everybody what a smorgasbord is?

[general confusion]

Richard Bravard: You know how you have big pitch-in dinners? And you invite everybody in, if it was a church social? And then maybe there's a basket to throw money in to raise to do things for the church? A smorgasbord, back then the churches and organizations had smorgasbords and they'd charge so much for a plate dinner

Charles Bravard, Jr: And sometimes they'd call it a fish fry.

Richard Bravard: Today they call 'em fish fry's, back then it was smorgasbord because you had about five or six different meats, you had all the pies that every housewife made and potato salad from everywhere. And everybody cooked back then, there wasn't [intelligible] They didn't have any McDonald's or any of that. Lucky to have a fry joint [intelligible].

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: And you didn't want one of those.

Richard Bravard: But we did eat down there every once and a while. But anyhow, we was having a smorgasbord because they was putting a new addition on Mt. Lebanon. And it's still the newest addition on Mt. Lebanon.

Charles Bravard, Jr: They're still using it.

Richard Bravard: Yeah. So Dad says "We need to put a new addition on this church because we need to have a community building so that we can have room for all the people when we have weddings and everything else and we can use it so we don't have to rent another and we won't charge for it. Everybody, it's a community building, they can all use it on the church."

Charles Bravard, Jr: And we had a lot of kids in church those days. And you wanted someplace that we could congregate to eat.

Richard Bravard: Rather than run out [intelligible] Anyhow, we couldn't have bible school cause then we didn't even have any classes for bible schools or nothing

else, okay? So he says "We need to build this building." And they [the church members] says "Ah man, well it'll be work." And he spent a couple three years arguing with all the church people and everything.

Charles Bravard, Jr: "Oh, it's gonna cost us-

Richard Bravard: And he'd been trustee and he'd repaired the church.

Paul Bravard: Did Pop put the supports in to keep the walls from collapsing?

Richard Bravard: Oh yeah. He done that as well as the bell. But anyhow-

Charles Bravard, Jr: They had to fix the bell. Kinda like how you did at your church.

Richard Bravard: -they needed the addition on the church. "Oh it'll cost too much. Oh, it'll do this. We'll never-" You know, everybody in the world's a naysayer. They say it won't work. So anyway, finally got 'em convinced. He says "Well I'll get the cement donated. I'll get the iron for the trusses donated. *All* this stuff donated. All we need is a neighbor and some money to do some windows and some other things. It's still gonna cost you some money." They still whining. Then he says "Well, we'll start making the money. We'll see if we need to spend it on that or not." But anyway, we had a smorgasbord and we had it done pretty good. I mean, they made pretty good money and it was just right there at the church. So Dad says "Well, we need to increase this." Well, a boy that didn't even go to the church but owned the land across from the church

Charles Bravard, Jr: Eighty acre field, two gates.

Richard Bravard: Yeah, *huge* field.

Alex Bravard: Was there a fence connecting the gates?

Charles Bravard, Jr: There was a fence between. They had the two gates and it was big enough for him to get his combines through so it was easy to get through.

Richard Bravard: So then off the road he had a big deal went in through the farm and everything. Wasn't a big barn or nothing, there was a small shed. But anyway, Dad says "I will get tents and we'll lease that property to have a smorgasbord." So *all* summer us kids is out running around with flyers on our bikes to everybody's house, sticking stuff in mailboxes, putting it in doors all over the county. 'Course we didn't have to have parental guidance then to do this shit. Don't get in trouble and get back.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Here's your flyers, go do it.

Richard Bravard: So anyway-

Charles Bravard, Jr: Don't come back until you don't have any.

Richard Bravard: So anyway, we all go out and we canvas the entire Hancock County, man, everywhere you can think of.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Wherever we could ride to and get back the same day. You had to be able to get back.

Richard Bravard: Yeah, had to be able to get back. So we did, we got the whole county covered. And so smorgasbord day was coming. It [the flyer] had on there the date, types of food and everything else and price and so on or whatever you could afford. That was the thing. Back then, it'd be like three dollars for a plate lunch, okay? And that included two or three meats and your drink and anything you can think of, desserts, all that. Or what you and your family could afford. Well you know, all the tight asses would always come. That was the way it worked. So anyways, Dad rented these tents and then he didn't have much money, but he spent all his money renting these tents but he got 'em at a discount. Now we're talking about circus tents.

Charles Bravard, Jr: These suckers were *huge*. And they looked like circus tents, they had color. And one of the tents was to cook in, one of the tents was to eat. It had all the grub lined up.

Richard Bravard: Yeah, had all the tables to eat on. So anyway, and it was a three day event is what it was, for the smorgasbord. And they opened up the first day and they'd done pretty good. People were stopping and looking. We had signs all up and down the road and everything. And they done pretty good, they was pretty thrilled. So the next day they was like "Well, it'd be nice if we had a whole lot more." So anyways, all us kids heard 'em talk about how they needed the money and how was they gonna get it all. "Sure would be nice if we could figure a way to get that traffic to stop and get in here." That was all us kids needed to hear. So we get in the middle of the road and block traffic to get every car that get on that road to go in there.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Now let me say one more thing. When I said bebop hats, Pop got wind of it, he went and got these big floppy hats that were brightly colored. Every kid had one and a flashlight in case it got dark.

- Richard Bravard:** And remember, he knows nothing about it. So he says. Till this day, he'd claim he didn't.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** We got out there in that road. If you can down the road this way or you came down the road the other way-
- Richard Bravard:** There wasn't nowhere to go but through that field. We waved you through that-
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** We blocked the road, waved 'em through, by the time they got up to the tent they said "Hell, we might as well eat." And they got in and ate. Every car that ever went through there. They made more money-
- Richard Bravard:** The adults didn't have time to ask where in the world everybody come from, they couldn't keep up with food.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** They had these women running over to their homes cooking all kinds of stuff, everything. Trying to get it back. We also had ice cream we sold and it came out of the Greenfield Ice Cream Company. And they had to go there to the church, get on the phone and say "Bring us some more ice cream, we're running out down here!" And they'd bring the truck down, sold that, and we had to pay for it.
- Richard Bravard:** But this went on after dark. It was eleven o'clock at night before they decided to shut it down.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** We're out there waving cars in with our flashlights.
- Richard Bravard:** They got more money than they ever knew what to do with. I mean, they was just beyond themselves. But then the next day they were still gonna have it. 'Course they were about done out of everything. But halfway through the next day, they says "Wonder where all the people are?" 'Cause we weren't going back in the middle of the road anymore.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah, we weren't supposed to do that.
- Richard Bravard:** It was about, what three days after the whole thing was over? All the adults finally come to their senses about being totally wore out and working 24 hours a day on this thing and everything else. Trying to figure out where in the world everybody were and why they all stopped.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** So they closed up early because there wasn't enough people.

Richard Bravard: They figured it out when some kid was saying “Well, Richard, Chuck, Bill, Tom, George, and everybody got [intelligible] They was all out in the middle of the road all night long waving them cars in.” “*What?* They could have gotten run over!” You know, all this stuff later on.

Charles Bravard, Jr: I mean, we blocked the road on both sides.

Richard Bravard: Yeah. You know, there had to be a car coming that hadn’t been there already because they come down the road, they gonna hit the next car not us.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Remember, this was back in the days when people weren’t drunk all the time and run over you anyhow ‘cause they drunk. Anyhow, so they would pull in and they came by and there’s food and they thought “What the heck?”

Julie Bravard: So did you get the MYF?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, that was the MYF group.

Alex Bravard: What’s MYF?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Methodist Youth group.

Richard Bravard: Needless to say, they built a nice little addition.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And these people would kick in a lot of cash.

Richard Bravard: Oh yeah, they did. We’d seen hundred dollar bills flying all over the place for a family for two or three. And back then that was a lot.

Charles Bravard, Jr: By the time they got in, they got the food and knew what they were doing, they were fairly generous people. But it was just- some of those people were from out of state. But anyway-

Hetty McMullen: “Please don’t keep us here!”

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, they probably though we was gonna lock em up in there.

Richard Bravard: But here’s the deal – all the other churches the next year didn’t have the nerve to block the road. Them churches, but they was whining why they couldn’t make more money.

Alex Bravard: So Pop did know, that you guys-

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, he bought the bebop hats and gave us the flashlights.

Richard Bravard: He never told us to.

Charles Bravard, Jr: He said "Here take these hats and flashlights."

Richard Bravard: "It's gonna get dark out, boys."

Charles Bravard, Jr: "You know it's gonna get dark tonight."

Richard Bravard: Girls were involved too. Girls, boys, whoever needs a flashlight.

Charles Bravard, Jr: So anyway, the biggest thing was those people, when Pop put that tent up, you never heard so much whining and sniveling. "My god, we'll never be able to pay for the tent. We'll never be able to pay for the tent. How could you do this?" And then when they were counting the money, their mouths shut counting that money. And they had enough money that they didn't have to build the building themselves. They used whatever he [Pop] got free, bought the rest, and built it. And that's how they got it.

Julie Bravard: So he [Pop] didn't get the tent?

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, but he got a real good deal on it from someone he knew. Oh, I tell you how he got the deal. He worked at W. J. Holiday and Old Man Holiday had this big park and he had the tents. He would put 'em up for our once a year thing and he [Pop] talked to him [Holiday] and he donated the use of them. He [Pop] said "I'll send the boys down and we'll put the tents up." But if he damaged 'em, he'd pay for them. The poles were huge. Remember, he was gonna have to pay for the tents-

Richard Bravard: The tents were so huge that only one of them would fit in the back of a full-sized pickup truck. I remember loading one up with those big poles. These poles were huge. We had to use farm tractors to pull the poles up and set up the tents

Charles Bravard, Jr: You know the farmers in the area brought over the tractors. I mean, it was something different. There wasn't a whole lot to do and this was something different. But that church wouldn't have never had that room if it weren't for Pop.

Audio Interview Transcription
House Moving
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: There was a little old lady who lived in Greenfield where the guy next door had purchased the property and had it surveyed. And her house stuck over, I think it was a foot and a half or two foot, on his property and he told her she either had to move or sign the house over to him. She didn't have any money and somehow Pop got wind of it and said "Okay, don't worry, hon.-"

Richard Bravard: His civic duty to help the neighbors.

Charles Bravard, Jr: -I'll get the boys and we'll move the house." Which we had no idea what we were doing. He said "We're gonna go move the house." And then he comes around with four of these big, steel jacks, house jacks. And the pipe, ya know-

Julie Bravard: Where did he get these house jacks?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Oh, there was a house mover down the road who had it.

Julie Bravard: What, he talks to him for ten minutes and says you're gonna go move a house-

Richard Bravard: Ed Boyer. Ed Boyer.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Ed Boyer. He says, "Ed, I got this problem." Well Ed probably would've done it, but Pop had already said "If you loan me the jacks, boys and I'll move the house, don't worry about it." So Ed said "Well, you're gonna need this, this, and this." And he furnished us with the steel rails and everything to move it. But what happened was we weren't – as we got ready to move it, there were complications. A – if we slid it over two foot, what was it going to sit on? So we had to build a foundation, block it up. Okay, make that. Then as we got ready to move it, and you get on all four corners, Pop would holler "One!" We'd do a twist. He'd holler "Two!" we'd do a twist.

Julie Bravard: So was there a boy at each corner and Pop at one?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Uh-huh, there was a boy at each corner and Pop at a corner.

Alex Bravard: How old were you?

Charles Bravard, Jr: We were teenagers, weren't we?

Richard Bravard: Yeah, we wasn't out of the house yet.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Probably about 11, 14. Yeah, 14.

Alex Bravard: Everything happened when you were fourteen.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, yeah.

Richard Bravard: Well there was a lot of life, ya know.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Anyways, we was ready to move the house and then we realized that the gas line and the water line, they was under the house and was still hooked. It wouldn't stretch. So Pop had to go buy some special tubing, unhook 'em, hook the tubing to it. 'Cause even though they were kinda to the center, moving it two foot would crack the pipe and we – could've caught the house on fire and then you wouldn't have to worry about moving it. So we put in the flex hoses and we were ready. So we go back to our corners-

Julie Bravard: They have flex hoses back then?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well they was black rubber.

Richard Bravard: Everything was rubber.

Charles Bravard, Jr: They was black rubber.

Richard Bravard: Same thing they used on the [unintelligible] back then.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, but it held up. It didn't have biodegradable stuff, I mean you couldn't get rid of it.

[laughter]

Richard Bravard: I still got some of them hoses in my barn.

[laughter]

Alex Bravard: You got everything in your barn.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, anyway we did the-

Julie Bravard: He probably has those jacks in his barn.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, I think he still – he probably still does, we kept two of ‘em. Well anyways, we did our thing, we got it jacked up. Everything was looking good.

Susan Bravard: And this little woman was still in the house?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, we told her she had to get out and go on the other side to tell us when it slid over and lined up with the new foundation. Okay? Well then, we got ready to slide the rails under the rails that went this way so we could slide it. Then we realized we had laid the cement blocks straight across and the rails would have been on top of the blocks, so if we slid it, it wouldn’t have laid on the foundation. So we had to knock down two blocks and drop it down in there so we could slide it, okay? And then we realized they were too small so we had to do – remember we had to put that stuff under? – anyway, we got it in. And then we got ready to move it. And we were ready.

Alex Bravard: Are you sure?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah. And it’s on the jacks-

Julie Bravard: Who got to go under the house and make all this happen?

Paul Bravard: Probably Bill.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Once it was jacked up high enough, I think Pop actually went under it and did the stuff. But then it was time to move it and the problem is, you had to get it at an angle so it would-

Richard Bravard: Slide downhill.

Charles Bravard, Jr: So anyways, Pop gives us-

Julie Bravard: So it was on a hill? You had to move it on a hill?

Richard Bravard: No, you raise it so you can slide it downhill.

Charles Bravard, Jr: See, the house was like, so when you raise it, it slides.

Richard Bravard: We didn't have no Bobcats, no cranes, we got kid power here.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: So Pop hands us these great – you don't know what these are, but back in the old days, the railroad guys had these huge steel things that they would put under the railroad car wheel and pull on them and make the cars go so they could move around.

Richard Bravard: That's a thing you can't lift around.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, and we got –we had two of 'em. So he gives, I think it was Bill and Pop was on one end and you [Richard] and I was on the other, and we'd put them underneath the high beams on this side of the house. And he [Pop] says, "Lift!"

Richard Bravard: It was bigger than a crowbar, crowbar was pissant compared to this.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, see we didn't have enough jacks-

Richard Bravard: These things was long. It was eight feet long and the irons this big around.

Paul Bravard: We used them on combines when they got jammed.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, one end of it was tapered and the other wasn't. But anyway, he said lift so we did. And somehow we managed to get the thing to start sliding and the lady was supposed to holler "You're there!" or "Ho!" or something. And she wasn't real good at it.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: And somehow we got it over there and we got it set down. Well now the walls this way was still there and the new one was there and the old one we chipped out. But unfortunately, two foot over there is no foundation on this side because we hadn't built it yet. So we had to tear down the old one and build the foundation. And we built it right smack up. It was a perfect job. Then it dawned on us that we didn't have any anchor holds.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: So we had to *take* the blocks out. Pop had this old drill that he got at work that was at an angle and he *drills* the holes in. Then we took-

Richard Bravard: Put bolts down in it and filled it with cement.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Put 'em in there, we couldn't put a cap on because it was outside the house, we didn't want-

Richard Bravard: But it kept it from sliding off.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Exactly. So one side of the house was angled and the rest of it, so long Louie. And-

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: -she lived in there until she died.

Susan Bravard: That was the next week.

[laughter]

Susan Bravard: From watching you move her house.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, let me put it to you this way – we didn't want to move any more houses.

Richard Bravard: That was when the Bravard boys understood what preparation means.

[laughter]

Richard Bravard: We don't need a book to learn that stuff.

Alex Bravard: How long did it take you?

Charles Bravard, Jr: I don't know, it was a few days.

Richard Bravard: Ah man, we worked from time up till it was dark!

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well we had to wait for the cement to set each time.

Alex Bravard: So you didn't have any Quikrete?

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, are you kidding, we mixed it ourselves. Pop had a cement mixer and he drug it up there.

Susan Bravard: Which is in Richard's garage.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well anyway, we got the job done.

Audio Interview Transcription
Ku Klux Klan 1
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

- Richard Bravard:** -their organization messing around this country on this end.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Don't mess on the other end or they'll-
- Susan Bravard:** Is that the KKK?
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Uh-huh, that's the Grand Dragon.
- Richard Bravard:** And this guy's standing there looking at him [Pop] and he says "Don't you give me that look, I've killed people for less."
- [laughter]
- Susan Bravard:** Who said that?
- Paul Bravard:** Pop did.
- Susan Bravard:** Pop said that?
- Richard Bravard:** Yeah, and this kid's standing there like he just can't-
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Yeah, he was in the war.
- Richard Bravard:** You know and he's [Pop's] fresh home from World War II.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** Danny Pornell.
- Richard Bravard:** Pornell, yeah. And this same man sent his own children that didn't believe much in the Ku Klux Klan to the insane asylum for being *crazy*. Mentally retarded. That's the truth. Back then, he could send any kid he wanted anywhere, there was no child protection.
- Charles Bravard, Jr:** None of this handy dandy stuff.
- Richard Bravard:** Yeah, there's people on the other end of the county who would beat their kids and lock 'em up in trunks. I'm telling you, the world was tough before they got all this so-called legislation.
- Julie Bravard:** See these guys didn't just know this, because-

Richard Bravard: We lived through it.

Julie Bravard: Grandpa didn't just go and say this to this guy, he put them [his kids] in the car and took them-

Charles Bravard, Jr: We had to go.

Richard Bravard: We seen first-hand.

Julie Bravard: -to see him saying to this guy, "I didn't go to war to end all this hatred and put my own life [unintelligible] to come and see it here."
[unintelligible]

Richard Bravard: But he had six kids and there was only three still at home cause the rest were in the nuthouse.

Charles Bravard, Jr: It wasn't long after that, he moved.

Richard Bravard: He did. Moved completely out of the state and everywhere, he was gone. After, I bet it wasn't even a year.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, he was gone.

Susan Bravard: Well, Richard, KKK people are just bullies where you just do that-

Richard Bravard: Well, I know who they are. She-

Susan Bravard: Yeah, I know that because no wonder that worked, because he faced them down.

Richard Bravard: Well, you never met my dad when he was mad.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: He would have shot him, Susan.

Richard Bravard: Yes.

Charles Bravard, Jr: He would have gone back home, got the gun, blown his head off-

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: That's exactly what he would've done.

Richard Bravard: But at the same time-

Charles Bravard, Jr: It was kinda scary.

Richard Bravard: Now it wasn't that we was little-little, because Marijo was along too. And this guy raised Chinchillas to make money because you wanna work a job that'll keep you busy hating everybody.

Charles Bravard, Jr: He had made Jamaican chinchillas.

Richard Bravard: Yes, because Marijo stuck her fingers in the cage and-

Charles Bravard, Jr: That's how she got her scar.

Richard Bravard: But I will say this for the Klu Klux Klan man, he jumped down there and knocked her away from the cage or it would've probably eaten it, bone and all.

Audio Interview Transcription
Ku Klux Klan 2
Personal Interview – December 21st, 2018

Marijo Carr: When I was a kid growing up we lived on 500 South. But next to us was one of the two black families, and this was in the 1960's probably right around there, that were in the county, the only two. There was a husband and a wife, they didn't have any kids. But even back then, people were very cultural scared. And in our county at that time we had the head Kl Klux Klan leader, which was the Grand Dragon, is what he's called. And he was in the county. Well, you're not supposed to know who they are. But my Dad knew who he was. And so, I remember as a kid, I couldn't have been very old, maybe 5 or 6, I could remember going with him to their house and him talking to them and telling them not to bother the neighbors. Bother them, harass them, or do anything because he [Pop] knew who he [Grand Dragon] was. And so he kinda scared, you know, scared him enough that he never bothered them the whole time. Never, ever were harassed. Never were bothered because he knew too much information on this guy. And I can remember them having minks, they raised minks. And I can remember that real well because one of them bit me. So I can remember that quite-

Audio Interview Transcription
Christmas Trees
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: Pop was pretty ingenious. I'll never forget the time that we planted the Christmas trees he got for nothing.

Richard Bravard: Yeah, and then selling 'em.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah. Ten years later, they're big and we're selling Christmas trees and making some-

Paul Bravard: Is that where the pines came from?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Uh-huh.

Paul Bravard: Oh, I always wondered about that.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, you wondered why they were in rows?

Paul Bravard: Yes, I always wondered why they were in rows.

Charles Bravard, Jr: That's why, because we were selling the heck out of 'em. Yeah, that's where they came from. If we sold them live, we'd have to dig 'em up. And then people'd have 'em for Christmas trees and then plant 'em in their yard.

Richard Bravard: And Dad didn't sell 'em: here it is, it's done, take it home. Oh no. It included a whole nother setting.

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: Oh yeah, because it was marketing. So he'd send the kids to go dig the holes.

Richard Bravard: It didn't cost him nothing for us to go dig that hole.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And we had to bale 'em, and the hole's pretty big. Now wait a minute, those Christmas trees, you didn't have to dig 'em forever. They got too big and then you had to crawl up and cut the top off and sell it as a Christmas tree.

Julie Bravard: Yeah, and then grandma and grandpa of course have those trees that got like three branches.

Paul Bravard: Those trees were so *ugly*.

[laughter]

Paul Bravard: You'd look out the back and you got this tree with no top.

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: They were so awful!

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, you sold the tops out of the tree because they were so big. The tops were okay, so you made a tree. And now those trees are huge.

Audio Interview Transcription
Hot Bed
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: Alright, so what a hot bed is you take – what'd he take? I think 2x10s?

Richard Bravard: Any material you wanted.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Just make a big rectangle. Except what you do in a hot bed is you don't fill it with dirt, you fill it with sand and horse shit.

Paul Bravard: A *lot* of manure.

Charles Bravard, Jr: The reason you want is, it's hot.

Richard Bravard: It's hot, but it ain't as hot as chicken shit.

Charles Bravard, Jr: No.

Paul Bravard: No, that's true.

Richard Bravard: Chicken manure will burn up your plants.

Charles Bravard, Jr: Yeah, you can't do that.

Richard Bravard: It's too hot.

Charles Bravard, Jr: So in the first days when we'd build 'em, we had to go to the places that had horses and shovel the poop out and bring it back over, put it in, put sand in, and we planted sweet potato plants in it. We grew sweet potatoes, and I mean we could grow anything but sweet potatoes were a biggie. And then we would sell sweet potato plants out of the hot bed. Your Aunt Linda can tell you *all* about this stuff. Finally, Pop said, we were running out of horse, people didn't always have horses anymore. So Pop came up with electric coils that we put in to substitute for that. It's the same deal with the sand and dirt. Once you turned on the coils that heated and made the plants grow. And we had the glass windowpanes, is what they were, on top.

**Audio Interview Transcription
Baseball – Offer and Injury
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, let's see. He had – he went to the war and he came back and they offered him – was it St. Louis, wasn't it? That had him come in and try out? But by then he just couldn't.

**Audio Interview Transcription
Baseball – Injury
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016**

Richard Bravard: -and my dad-

Julie Bravard: But it wasn't that Grandpa didn't get offered.

Richard Bravard: Well, he was offered and Dad was offered. And could've went 'cause Dad was just as good. But Dad was in a car accident and he chipped his shoulder.

Charles Bravard, Jr: And he couldn't throw the same.

Richard Bravard: And they didn't have the surgeries then that they have today. Wouldn't have been nothing.

Julie Bravard: Still didn't stop him from learning to water ski at seventy two.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well, I know. That's cause it looked like it was fun.

Audio Interview Transcription
Pool Playing
Family Thanksgiving – November 24th, 2016

Charles Bravard, Jr: Now, I'm gonna go at it this way. Demosthenes, who was Pop's dad, made all kinds of money to support his family by playing baseball on the weekend, rest of the time he was a farmer. And they would pay big bucks, in all the surrounding towns, for him to come and pitch for 'em. And the pro teams in those days would come through and play the towns and of course they all expected to win. But when they came through and he was pitching, they didn't win. Okay, well, and Pop was the pool shark. And the towns would pay *him* to come around and play the other towns pros. And in those days, the balls didn't roll back on a rack, they dropped in and people put money in the pockets and set up shots. And your, your great-grandpa could take a ball and – you see them on TV with the fancy shots?

Richard Bravard: With the curls and-

Charles Bravard, Jr: Right up here in Cumberland, over there that's now a Sero's, was the big pool hall. And Indianapolis, the counties came in for the big shoot off. He was a representative-

Richard Bravard: We didn't have TV back then-

Charles Bravard, Jr: No, this was a biggie. And they all pooled their money and backed Pop going to – over here, we called it Buckley's later – But anyway, and the shoot off was you played until a certain point and the last, what was it, four, people playing would have a shoot off. Like a trick shot. So they put the money in the pocket – I dunno, it was a whole lot because I know they paid for the house with it, part of the house with it.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: But anyway, and the deal was, they set up these balls and you had to knock three balls in but you had to jump over like four balls spaced to get to the ball to hit it and then it had to spin enough to knock the other balls in. And nobody else had made it. So here comes Pop and he chalks her up, and he had his own white pool cue ball. He had her shined up, his was made out of ivory. He put her down there. He got ready. He popped it and that sucker went over the top, it hit that front ball at an angle, knock that one in, bounced over, knock the other one in, and then hit a rail and knocked the one over here in. I don't know how he did it. And they still talk about it, 'course they're dead now but back then they were alive. He

collected the money and he was their champ. And then Mom and Dad got married, Pop got religion, quit shooting ball and they damn near starved to death.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: I'm not kidding ya, they almost starved.

Julie Bravard: They started going to the senior center, right? And he started collecting-

Richard Bravard: The old timers were still there and said "You can't do what we've heard you can do." Man, you know what that would do to him.

Julie Bravard: He stopped being so religious.

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: And he said "Well, you getting that government check, why don't you put it-"

Charles Bravard, Jr: In the pocket

Julie Bravard: Yeah

Richard Bravard: So he didn't care if a guy was two hundred years old, he called him "Sonny"

[laughter]

Julie Bravard: Or "Sis". And he'd say "Well, Sis, why don't you put your money there on the rail?" And so they eventually had to bar him from playing pool because-

Charles Bravard, Jr: He was cleaning them out

Julie Bravard: -he was taking their entire social security check.

[laughter]

Alex Bravard: How old was he?

Charles Bravard, Jr: Oh, he was old.

Susan Bravard: Mom said that after Pop found religion and quit playing pool, they darn near starved to death.

[laughter]

Charles Bravard, Jr: Well 'cause he was racking them, back when they was paying 50 cents an hour, Pop was racking in 300, 400 bucks a week playing pool.

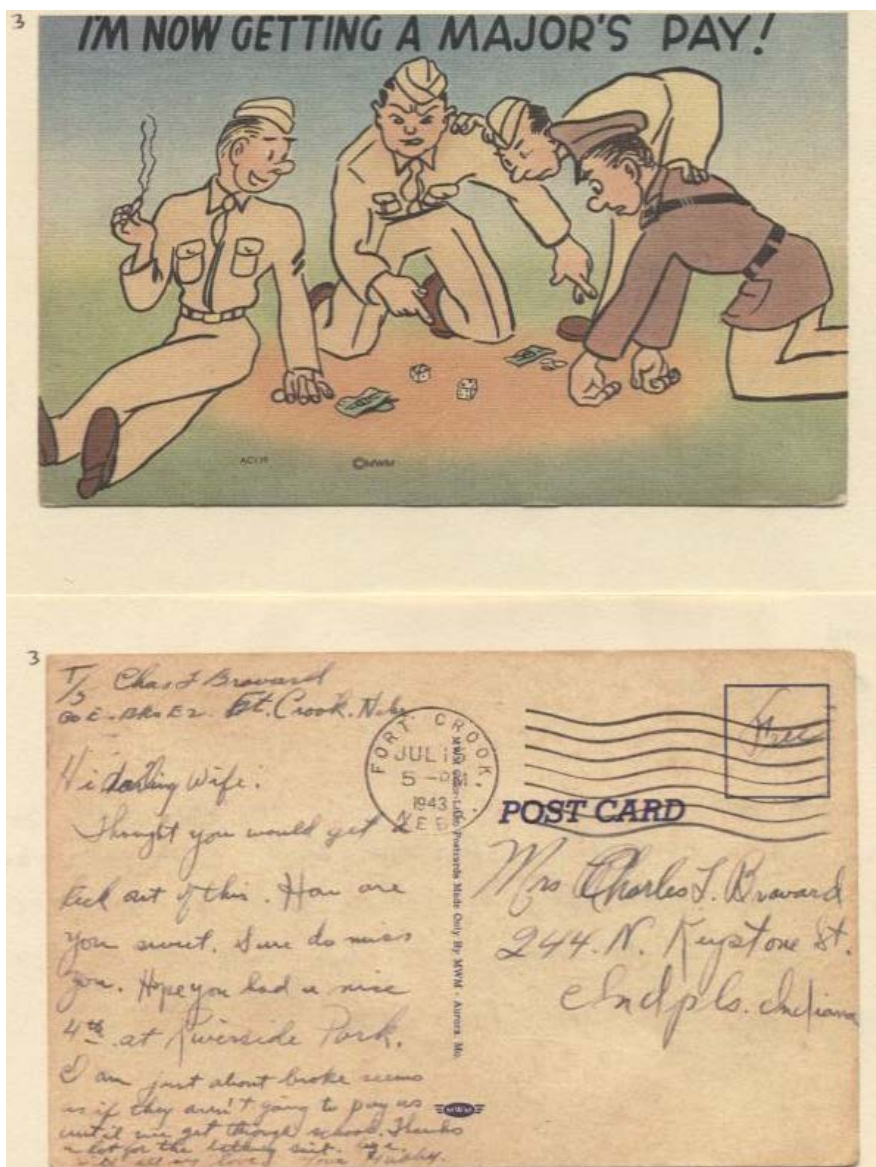
Richard Bravard: And the deal is, the reason he went back to playing pool after the war is because Grandpa Merlau was going to buy him the farm. And he said "Ain't no man taking care of my family but me." Grandpa even told me that, he said "Your daddy's the stubbornest man I ever met."

Appendix B

Documents

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Post Card – July 15

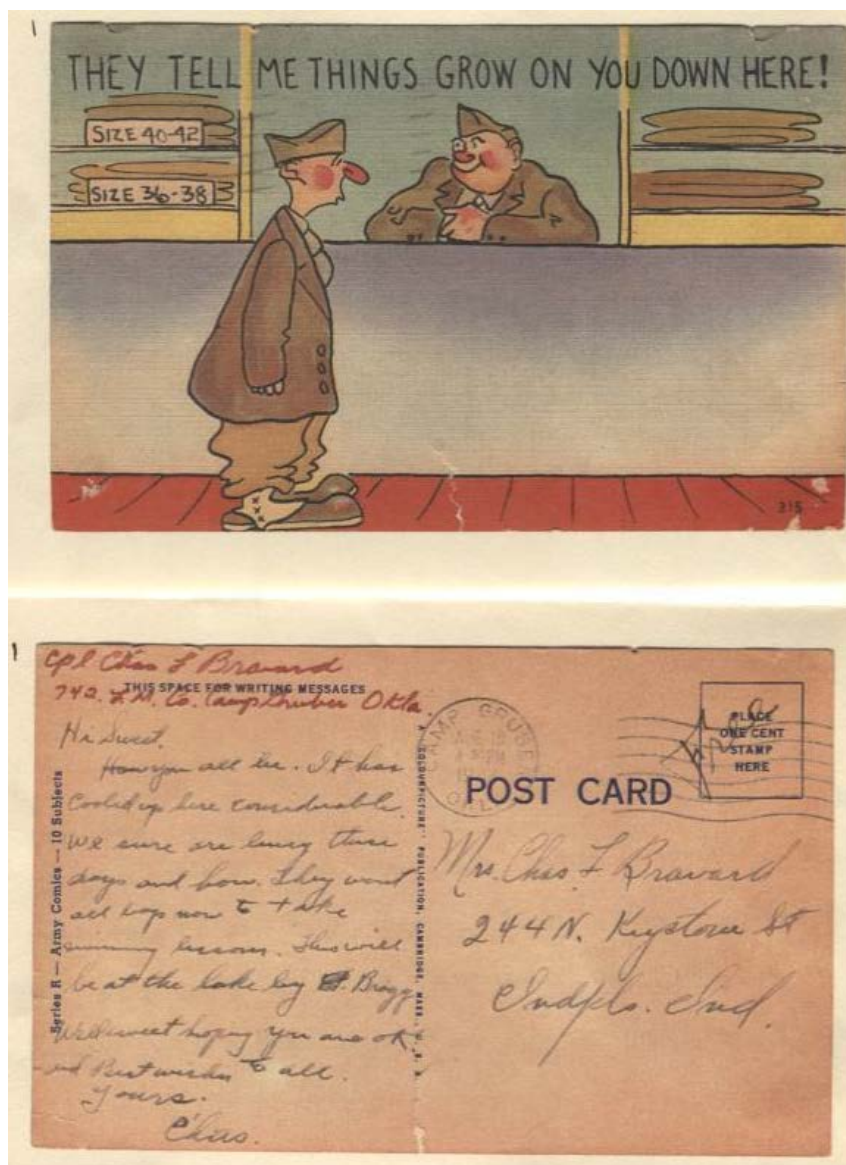


Text:

Hi darling wife.

Thought you would get a kick out of this. How are you sweet. Sure do miss you. Hope you had a nice 4th at Riverside Park. I am just about broke seems as if they aren't going to pay us until we get through school. Thanks a lot for the bathing suit. Bye. With all my love, Your Hubby.

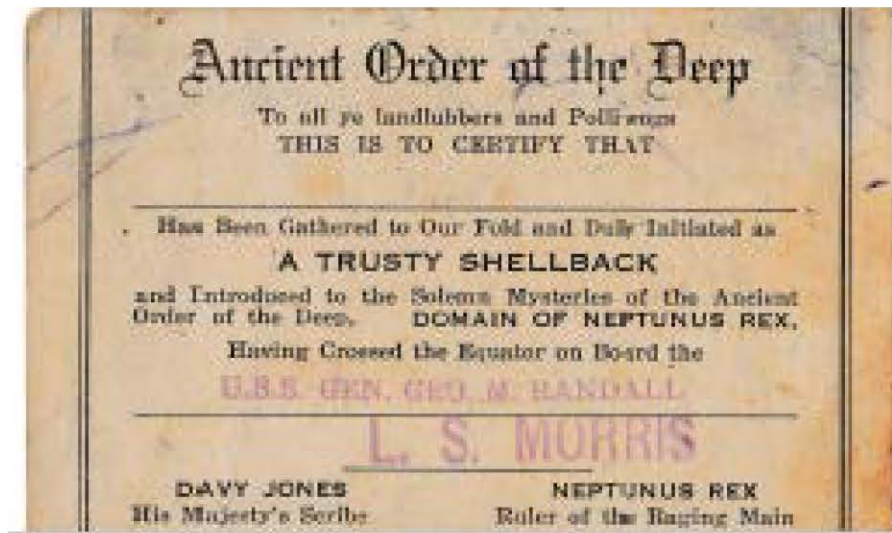
Postcard – August 19



Text:

Hi Sweet,
How you all be. It has cooled up here considerable. We sure are busy these days and how. They want all boys now to take swimming lessons. This will be at the lake by Brogg. Well sweet hoping you are ok and best wishes to all. Yours, Chas.

Ancient Order of the Deep Card



Nouvelle Calédonie (New Caledonia) Banknotes

